PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

Block Unit

ORGANIZATION ... ten or more representatives of families living within a block are needed to form a BLOCK UNIT.

OFFICERS ... are elected annually in November for one-year terms. They include the ...

Chairman—who presides at meetings and provides leadership for the unit.

Vice-Chairman—who assumes the duties of the chairman in his absence.

Secretary—who keeps the minutes and other records of the unit.

Assistant Secretary—who handles correspondence and assumes the duties of the secretary in his absence.

Treasurer—who receives, banks and disburses funds of the BLOCK UNIT.

COMMITTEES ... regular standing committees are appointed by the BLOCK UNIT chairman. These include the ...

Civic Committee—which meets with civic, police and other agencies to secure the enforcement of laws, to report violations, and which encourages registrations, voting and active participation in government on a non-partisan basis. The committee plans and reports on all matters of a civic nature ... such as necessary improvement of street lighting, transportation needs, necessary block improvements ... and measures to accomplish these things.

Membership Committee—which constantly solicits residents in the block to become active members of the BLOCK UNIT and encourages members who have become inactive to become participating members again.

Cheer Committee—which welcomes newcomers who move into the block, visits persons in the block who are sick, sends cards to those who are ill on behalf of the BLOCK UNIT, and sends florals to funerals of deceased members or close relatives of deceased members.

Program Committee—which plans and puts on programs by securing speakers, films, leaflets and educational aids for BLOCK UNIT meetings.

MEETINGS ... are held regularly each month.

DUES ... are voluntary and are voted by action of the BLOCK UNIT.

District Council

ORGANIZATION ... ten or more BLOCK UNITS compose a District Council.

CHAIRMAN ... a District Council chairman is appointed by the Area Council on recommendation of the Urban League Community Organization secretary. The District Council chairman works with the Area Council chairman and the Community Organization secretary to coordinate and stimulate activities of BLOCK UNITS within a district.

FUNCTIONS ... the District Council acts on problems which are of concern to two or more adjoining BLOCK UNITS ... such as repairs, sanitation, beautification programs, etc.

Area Council

ORGANIZATION ... the Area Council is composed of all BLOCK UNITS and District Councils within a geographical section of the city. (The City of St. Louis is divided into four geographical sections or areas by the Urban League Community Organization Department.)

FUNCTIONS ... the Area Council handles all problems, programs and activities within the area that are larger in nature than District Council problems ... such as transportation in the Ville or Compton Hill sections, police protection in the Lucas Avenue district, housing in the Petersville area, etc.

OFFICERS ... are elected annually in November. They include the ...

Chairman—who presides at all council meetings, is an ex-officio member of all committees, appoints standing or other committees in consultation with the Urban League Community Organization secretary, and works to revive inactive BLOCK UNITS.

Vice-Chairman—who presides at meetings in the absence of the Chairman, and serves as Area Council Chairman in the event the office is vacated by the duly elected Chairman.

Recording Secretary—who keeps the minutes of all Council meetings, files and maintains committee reports.

Corresponding Secretary—who sends notices of meetings to the membership and handles the correspondence of the Area Council.

Treasurer—who receives and disburses funds of the Area Council upon authorization, banks Area Council funds, and maintains a record of the Area Council finances.

COMMITTEES ... are appointed by the Area Council chairman. They include the ...

Executive Committee—which meets frequently to consider proposals of other Area Council committees and to plan Area Council activities.

Civic Committee—which plans civic activities for the Area Council, meets with responsible governmental agencies on Area Council problems and proposes action to be taken on these problems.

Education Committee—which studies educational needs of the area, visits schools in the area and reports on conditions, recommending action to be taken. It works with the program committee to see that educational materials meet area needs, institutes consumer education and other programs.

Membership Committee—which develops methods to increase membership and attendance in the Area Council and BLOCK UNITS, works to have all BLOCK UNITS represented at Area Council meetings and assists the Area Council chairman and Urban League Community Organization secretary in revitalizing inactive BLOCK UNITS.

Program Committee—which develops a comprehensive program for the Area Council and BLOCK UNITS in the area after consultation with other committees.

MEMBERSHIP ... all BLOCK UNIT members are members of their respective District and Area Councils and of the St. Louis Federation of Block Units. The BLOCK UNITS are represented at District and Area Council meetings by their respective chairmen and one other member selected by each BLOCK UNIT.

St. Louis Federation of Block Units

FUNCTIONS ... the Federation is the central body that represents BLOCK UNITS, District and Area Councils on a city and county-wide basis. It handles major problems that concern two or more Area Councils ... such as police protection or transportation problems that stretch across two areas. The Federation coordinates the activities of the Area Councils and proposes measures, plans activities and programs that can be followed at the Area, and District Council and BLOCK UNIT level.

MEMBERSHIP ... every member of a BLOCK UNIT is a Federation member, but representation is provided at meetings by the Area Council officers and one additional representative for every 10 active BLOCK UNITS in an Area Council.

The BLOCK UNIT plan of neighborhood organization, now used in many large cities, was founded in 1932 by the Urban League of St. Louis, a United Fund agency.

Now the largest neighborhood self-help improvement organization in the nation, the St. Louis Federation of Block Units was organized in 1933 by the Urban League of St. Louis.

The Urban League's Community Organization Department furnishes the professional services to the St. Louis Federation of Block Units and its Block Units, District and Area Councils.

TO ORGANIZE A BLOCK UNIT . . .

CALL JEfferson 3-3820

OR

WRITE THE URBAN LEAGUE OF ST. LOUIS
3017 DELMAR BLVD.,
ST. LOUIS 3, MO.

May, 1958

FIVE CENTS A COPY

For better living, better neighborhoods, a better community for you and your family and friends

BUILD YOUR BLOCK!

Here is the story of how "it's done with blocks"

A Block Unit . . .

Is composed of residents living on both sides of the street within a single city block. All residents in a block are eligible for membership—home owners, renters or roomers. There are no racial or religious restrictions to membership. BLOCK UNITS are *non-political*, non-sectarian, independent organizations, affiliated with the Urban League of St. Louis.

Its Aim . . .

"To obtain better and happier living through cooperative self help efforts."

Its Objectives Include . . .

1. Improving neighborhoods—block by block, encouraging home upkeep, improvement, clean streets and alleys.
2. Furnishing residents information on rehabilitation, housing, zoning, sanitation ordinances and other government regulations.
3. Cooperating with governmental and private agencies to improve health, education, housing, recreation, cultural standards for all. Working closely with building, health, recreation departments, schools, adult education groups, civic organizations.
4. Encouraging better citizenship — that rights and duties exist—discussing proposed laws, how to use election ballots, encouraging registration and voting.
5. Developing the good neighbor spirit of team work thereby overcoming the impersonality of city life.
6. Developing grass roots leaders, who know block problems, to speak for and to organize action for neighborhood improvement.

Recent Accomplishments of St. Louis Block Units

HOME AND NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

Better Block and Yards Beautiful campaigns resulted in major and minor repairs on homes and fences, cleaning of streets and alleys and the planting of lawns and gardens.
Leadership furnished for neighborhood rehabilitation in the Fountain Park and Tandy areas.
Sponsored, in cooperation with public agencies, information program on urban renewal, housing, Mill Creek Valley, new expressways, relocation and city planning.
Leadership furnished for "Operation Greater St. Louis," the nation's first "talk-back" T.V. program on neighborhood improvements.
Encouraged the building of platforms for garbage containers and sanitation control.
School stop signs secured and two-way streets made one-way.
New sewers and sidewalks constructed in Wellston and North Webster Groves.

RECREATION

Spearheaded civic efforts to have Yeatman Square reconverted into a badly needed play area.
Secured outdoor play lots for children.
Helped to get repairs for Vashon playground.
Sponsored garden clubs for children.
Secured camp scholarships for deserving youth.

NEIGHBORHOOD NUISANCES

Eliminated taverns and pool hall nuisances.
Prevented spot zoning in residential streets by appearance before Aldermanic Committees.
Had Building Commissioner to demolish dangerous unused building on Garrison and Franklin.
Eliminated illegal truck parking in residential streets.
Had Easton Avenue commercial firms to expand their sanitation facilities adjacent to residential areas.

EDUCATIONAL

Pioneered in presenting vocational guidance programs which gave parents information on jobs and training needs for youth.
Sponsored consumer education clinics.
Conducted forums on rooming house laws, family life, F.H.A., health and sanitation, fire protection, use of voting machines and public affairs.
Helped to organize a city-wide citizens committee for better enforcement of sanitation laws.
Welcome program for persons newly arrived in St. Louis.

HUMAN RELATIONS

Furthered intergroup relations through emphasis on "better blocks" regardless of race or religion; interracial cooperation for neighborhood improvement emphasized.
Aided law enforcement and better understanding through cooperation with police-community relations committees.